



## **HEALTH ADVISORY (#41)**

### **Use of Rapid Influenza Diagnostic Tests for the 2010-2011 Flu Season**

**TO: West Virginia Healthcare Providers, Hospitals and other Healthcare Facilities**

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**LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY HEALTH PROVIDERS, HOSPITAL-BASED PHYSICIANS, INFECTION PREVENTIONISTS, LABORATORY DIRECTORS, AND OTHER APPLICABLE PARTNERS

**OTHER RECIPIENTS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ASSOCIATION MEMBERS, STAFF, ETC.

Rapid influenza diagnostic tests (RIDTs) are an important tool in the diagnosis of influenza. In less than 15 minutes the RIDTs can identify the presence of influenza A and B viral nucleoprotein antigens and provide a positive or negative result. Due to limited sensitivities and predictive values, however, care should be taken when interpreting results.

1. Antiviral treatment should not be withheld from patients with clinical indications for antiviral therapy and a negative RIDT when influenza activity is high in the community. In this setting, false negatives occur more commonly than false positive results.
2. False positive results are more likely to occur when the prevalence in the community is low, generally the beginning and end of influenza season and during the summer. If clinically indicated, positive RIDTs should be confirmed by another more specific test (culture or PCR).

The CDC has published **guidelines for use of RIDTs**:

[http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/professionals/diagnosis/clinician\\_guidance\\_ridt.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/professionals/diagnosis/clinician_guidance_ridt.pdf)

**Antiviral guidance:** <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/summary-clinicians.htm>

**WVDHHR flu surveillance data** is updated weekly. Surveillance data and other flu resources can be found at: [www.wvdeh.org](http://www.wvdeh.org), "A - Z Index of Infectious Diseases", "Influenza".

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health to Local Health Departments, Infection Preventionists, Laboratory Directors and other applicable state partners. Receiving entities are responsible for further disseminating the information as appropriate to the target audience.

**Categories of Health Alert messages:**

**Health Alert:** Conveys the highest level of importance, warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** Provides important information for a specific incident or situation. May not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation. Unlikely to require immediate action.